

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

OMB-01 RSR-01 /093 W

----- 055577

R 291703 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0100

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMCONSUL BELFAST

UNCLAS LONDON 03702

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: JUNE ELECTIONS LIKELY FOR NEW ULSTER ASSEMBLY

1. THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED AND THE OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE ENDORSED, THE SPEEDY ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION TO ENABLE ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN JUNE FOR THE PROPOSED NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY. AT THE OPENING OF A TWO- DAY DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON NORTHERN IRELAND, PRIME MINISTER HEATH AND OPPOSITION SPOKESMEN AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF HOLDING THE ELECTIONS BEFORE THE ONSET OF THE " MARCHING SEASON" IN ULSTER AND ALSO BEFORE THE IMPETUS OF THE WHITE PAPER IS LOST.

2. LABOR SPOKESMAN MERLYN REES URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO FIND MEANS TO PERMIT SIN FEIN TO CONTEST THE ELECTIONS, IF ONLY TO EXPOSE ITS DERISORY WEAKNESS AT THE BALLOT BOX.

3. HEATH EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE PROPOSED NEW COUNCIL OF IRELAND WOULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH CONCRETE ISSUES AND PRACTICAL ACTION, AND NOT BECOME A FORUM FOR REVIVING OLD QUARRELS. HE SAID THAT HMG WOULD NOT OBJECT IF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF NI AND THE REPUBLIC BOTH PREFERRED THAT THE UK NOT PARTICIPATE IN JOINT INSTITUTIONS. THE UK WOULD HAVE TO RETAIN, HOWEVER, UNCLASSIFIED

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RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY FUNCTIONS, OBLIGATIONS ARISING
OUT OF EC MEMBERSHIP, AND FINANCE PROVIDED FROM UK SOURCES.

4. COMMENT: CONSIDERING THE GRAVITY OF THE ISSUE UNDER
CONSIDERATION AND THE SWEEP OF THE CHANGES BEING PROPOSED,
YESTERDAY' S DEBATE WAS SURPRISINGLY LOW- KEY. HEATH OPENED UP
TO HALF- EMPTY CHAMBER, AND BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION
WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO INDICATE THEIR MUTUAL WILLINGNESS TO
COOPERATE IN SUPPORT OF THE WHITE PAPER. ANNENBERG

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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